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LOST WILLIE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'THE more I think of it, the more it seems to me that it must be done,' said my mother, as she was washing up the breakfast things the morning after her return from Deepvale.

'What is it that must be done, mother?' said I.

'Just this, Susannah,' she answered: 'that you must go and live at Deepvale for a while, and look after Davy and the poor bairn. It will never do to leave them entirely among strangers; for Davy's so feckless in a house, that anybody with a mind to it might rob him right and left, and he be none the wiser. If he was by himself, it would be different: he might then give up the house, and take a decent lodging in the village, and fight on as he did afore he was married; but having the lad to look after makes all the difference. I would fain have brought Willie back wi' me, but Davy's feelings are so sore just now, that he wouldn't hear of it; so, as I said before, it seems to me there's nothing for it but for you to go and look after Davy's comforts for a time, and act a mother's part by the poor lad.'

My mother's words almost took my breath away, and well they might. I was now close upon twenty years old, and in all my life I had never been further from home than the nearest market-town; yet here was my mother talking coolly of my going to Deepvale, which was thirty miles away across the hills, and quite in another world, as one might say!

It was a sad business enough that had taken mother herself all the way to Deepvale, at that busy time of the year, when she could so ill be spared at home—nothing less than the sickness and death of my sister Alice. How often it seems in families that it is the brightest and best—those that will be missed the most—that are called away first; or may be it is that we notice such cases more than others, and that makes them seem to come oftener in proportion than they really do. All I know is, that our brightest and best was gone

when Alice died, and that I couldn't even go and press one last kiss on the beautiful white face before it was put away for ever. I did feel it hard not to have that poor consolation; but my father was so ill at the time that he couldn't be left both by mother and me; so I had to stay at home and nurse him, and look out every morning, with a sickening heart, for the postman, till I got the black-bordered letter which told me all was over.

Alice had only been married eight years when she died. Her husband, David Winterburn, came from a long way off—'down south,' as he used to say himself, and was a stranger to everybody in our village when he opened school in old Nixon's place. He was a thin, sickly-looking young man; and being lame of one leg, he had to use a thick stick to help him in walking. Finding, after a time, that the school didn't pay him very well, he got a situation on the railway, and went to be station-master at Deepvale. But he had won our Alice's heart, and got her promise to wed him before he went away; and a month or two later, he came over and married her. It was that soft-spoken, drawling, south-country tongue of his that cozened my sister into loving him—she that might have had her pick of half-a-dozen as handsome fellows as any in the county. He used to give her writing-lessons, and read poetry to her, and tell her all about the moon and stars, and how the earth is made; and so, after a time, love-making came easy to both of them; and it was a comfort both to mother and me afterwards to know that Alice had never repented her choice.

I quietly thought over for two or three days what mother had said to me, striving to see clearly where my duty lay, and at last I settled that I would go to Deepvale, and look after Davy and the child. So mother wrote a few lines to say when Davy might expect me; and after that, it was a busy time with both of us till the day came round, though the hard work mainly lay on mother's shoulders; while, for myself, I had to go tea-drinking to one friend's house after another, and never seemed to have had it brought home to me how much people really cared for me till

now, when the nearness of my departure brought hidden feelings uppermost, and hearts warmed to one another in a way that would always be pleasant to think of afterwards.

Mother's busy fingers got everything ready in good time, and that last night of my stay at home we spent together by our two selves, sitting in the cosy nook by the kitchen-fire, and quietly talking things over. We were up early next morning, and had breakfast by candle-light, as the coach started at six o'clock. Peter Lovick took my box down to the coach-office in his barrow, mother and I walking a little way behind through the quiet shut-up streets, all white and rimy with the first frosts of autumn.

'The box seems heavy, mother,' I said, as Peter stopped to rest for a minute before going up the hill.

'Nay, it's not very heavy,' said my mother; 'but I'll warrant Peter was tipping last night, and so feels a bit shaky this morning. But when you come to open the box, Susannah, you'll find a couple of bottles of elder-wine; a drop of it warmed will be nice for Davy when he comes in cold from work of a winter's night. And you'll find poor Alice's china mug, that I gave her when she was six years old; Davy will may be like to drink his wine out of it—elder-wine should always be drunk out of china. And there's a few pots of black-currant jam, good for colds and sore throats, let alone puddings. Then there's a dozen or two nice eating apples for the lad, dandy brown russets; only be sure, Susannah, that you don't let him have more than one now and then, for I'm not one as holds w' giving children overmuch fruit. If my eyes stand good through the winter, I intend to knit the lad a few pair of warm socks, and— But there's the coach all ready to start. Be sure to write in a day or two, and let us know how everything is going on. I'll be bound now that Peter Lovick won't be content with less than sixpence for carrying the box, when a fourpenny-bit ought to be quite enough.'

A warm squeeze of the hand, a hearty kiss, a 'Good-bye, mother,' followed by a 'Good-bye, my lass, and God bless you,' and next minute I was being borne swiftly away through the dear old familiar streets, crying silently, and feeling for the first time in my life as if I were quite alone in the world. But I grew more cheerful presently, and then I could not help enjoying my ride through the clear, crisp morning air, away into that strange country, of which I had often dreamed, but had never seen before.

The coach only took me half-way, and I had to wait several hours at an inn in a little town till the cross-country carrier was ready to start. He made me a tolerably comfortable nest with some straw at the bottom of his wagon; and we set out, just as the afternoon was beginning to darken, to cross the dreary fells that stretched nearly all the way to Deepvale.

Davy was waiting for me at the inn-door when I got to my journey's end. Poor fellow! he looked

more sickly and hollow-eyed than ever, and my heart ached to see him.

'Welcome to Deepvale, Susannah,' he said in his grave quiet way; but I just put my arms round his neck, and gave him two hearty kisses; and then I could not help crying a bit to think how different everything would have seemed if my poor dead darling had been there to meet me.

We had not far to walk; and leaving my box to be sent after me, we soon reached Davy's snug little home, where a fire had been lighted in the best room in honour of my coming, and tea was laid out ready for me.

'David, my man,' I said as soon as the old woman who attended to these things had left the room, 'I can't take either bite or sup till I've seen the lad. Where is he?'

'Where should such small-fry be at this time of the night but in bed?' said David, with his sweet womanly smile, which I remembered so well; and with that he took the candle, and led the way to a little room up stairs, in which was a little bed, in which, as snug as any dormouse, little Willie lay coiled, and fast asleep. He started up half-mazed, and began to rub his eyes.

'I haven't been asleep, dad,' he said; and then he caught sight of me, and favoured me with a long steady stare. He had got his mother's blue eyes and flaxen curling hair, and all the sweet features of her face carved in little.

'This is thy aunt, Will, come all the way from Thringstone,' said David.

'I thought it was mother come back again to see us,' said the lad; 'only angels don't wear black clothes, do they?' he added, as he glanced at my mourning gown; and with that, his little hand, as warm as a mouse just out of its nest, stole into mine, and he screwed his lips into a little cherry-mouth, which he held up for me to kiss, and from that moment we loved one another dearly.

Next forenoon, as soon as I had got through my house-work, I set out, with Willie for my companion, to look about me a bit, and become better acquainted with my new home. But first of all, Willie and I made our way to the little churchyard behind the hill; and there, by the grave of my dear dead Alice, I promised again in my heart to do my best towards filling a mother's part to the poor bereaved lad. After that, we two wandered through the little village, which was quite hidden from the station by a turn and dip of the road. David's house, on this account, seemed more lonely than it really was; and travellers by rail, passing Deepvale as they went on their way north or south, might well wonder for what reason a station had been placed in such a seemingly desolate spot. The house itself was about three hundred yards away from the station proper, the road to which wound round by the end of the garden, so that everybody going to or coming from the trains passed within view of our window, which made it pleasanter and more lively than at first sight you would have supposed. To be sure, not many trains condescended to stop at such a poor place as Deepvale; but by the forenoon many a-mile, and by the market-train on Saturdays, there was generally a tolerable muster of passengers. At one end of the platform was built

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a little house, in which, with his wife, lived old Luke Moffatt, the porter who attended to the signals and the lamps, and did the rougher jobs about the station under David Winterburn's instructions.

As you stood at the other end of the platform, your eye could follow the line, which was nearly straight just here, to where it was lost in the entrance to the Deepvale tunnel, half a mile away. This tunnel was three-quarters of a mile in length, and pierced right through the heart of the hills by which the little valley was shut in on three sides.

I soon got used to the quiet routine of life at Deepvale; and if not happy, I at least grew contented with my lot in life, which is as much, I suppose, as the generality of people can say. That winter, Davy busied himself with re-arranging and labelling his collection of butterflies and moths and other insects. Strange-looking objects many of them were, goodness knows, and very curious in their way, I suppose, since so many ladies and gentlemen came at different times to see them, and seemed to think so highly of them. In warm weather, whenever Davy had an hour or two to spare, he was off into the fields, or wandering down by the brink of the river, with a big net in his hand, on the look-out for his favourites; and during those winter nights, as I have said, he busied himself with them at home. Davy had a good collection of books too; and he used to bring home other books and magazines from the village library; and having so much leisure this winter (the housework seemed a trifle to me after what I had been used to at home), I got into the way of spending all my spare time in reading, and grew by degrees to have a love for books, which has stood me in good stead many a time since, when, but for them, my life would have seemed weary and comfortless indeed. And so my first winter at Deepvale sped quietly and pleasantly away; and as for the lad, he just throve wonderfully, and day by day he seemed to grow closer to my heart.

Winter was hardly over when the valley was invaded by a number of engineers and surveyors, who had come to arrange for the new branch-railway, which was to join the main line a mile or two below the Deepvale station; and presently there came a horde of navvies with spade and pickaxe, who turned our quiet village into a brawling pot-house during the year that they stayed among us. Happily, we at the station saw very little of them. The money for their wages came to Davy from head-quarters every Friday, but was fetched away by one of their overseers, and we saw nothing of the men themselves. After a little while, this overseer and Davy grew to be very friendly; and then Davy took to bringing him over to have tea with us of a Friday evening, after which he would sit and smoke, and chat for an hour or two, and then march off with his bag of sovereigns, and be seen by us no more till Friday came round again. The name of this man was Hugh Sanderson; and if what I heard afterwards were true, he had himself when younger—he was now about eight-and-twenty years old—handled pick and spade; but being much superior to his companions, both in education and manners, he had been gradually advanced to his present position. He was tall, being over six feet in height, and strongly built; he had a big brown beard and moustache, and a handsome disdainful sort of face, that seemed never to have been touched by the

finger of care. Both Davy and I found Hugh Sanderson very good company; and we soon got to look forward to Friday evening as the pleasantest time of the week. His presence seemed to lighten up our somewhat dull little household wonderfully; he brought with him, as it were, a waft of fresh, bracing air from the world outside, that was very refreshing. Besides having seen a great deal of his own country, he had been employed on one or two railways abroad; and he had an easy laughing way of telling about what he had seen and gone through, that was as fascinating to Davy as it was to myself. As it happened, he was having tea with us the very evening that I got the letter informing me of the death of my godmother, Lady Halcomb, and that five hundred pounds had been left me by her Ladyship's will. Davy came round the table when I had finished reading out the letter aloud, and kissed me, and congratulated me on my good-fortune; and then Hugh Sanderson got up and shook hands with me, and said that he also must be allowed to congratulate me.

'I hope that good-fortune will not spoil Miss Deriton,' he added, 'as it does so many people, nor teach her to forget old friends.'

'Nay,' said Davy warmly, 'you don't know our Susannah as well as I do, or you would never think of such a thing. All the gold in the world wouldn't spoil her.'

I felt the hot colour mount right up to the roots of my hair. Why should Hugh Sanderson think for a moment that my 'good-fortune,' as he called it, would make me forget old friends? To be sure, he himself was no old friend of mine, although he might choose to put himself in the category. All that night, I thought more of Hugh's words than I did of the five hundred pounds that had come to me so unexpectedly.

I suppose I may put this down as the first dim consciousness I had of the delicious trouble that was creeping slowly over me: it was a consciousness that day by day, from that time, made itself more clearly felt. There were times when I struggled with it, when I fought against it in the dark with tears and prayers; for always in my heart there was a vague prescience that my acceptance of it would bring me nothing but sorrow and trouble without end. At other times, I abandoned myself to this new sweet feeling, and allowed myself to be borne unresistingly along on the current of that beautiful river which flows ever through the dreamland of Love.

And he—the man who, little by little, was stealing my heart away? Ah, yes! he too loved me, or seemed to do so. Could I be mistaken in my reading of the language of those dark eyes, that followed me so constantly as I moved about the room, and dwelt on me so meaningly as I sat opposite to them by the fireside? Could I fail to apprehend the veiled tenderness that lurked in the undertones of his voice when he spoke to me alone? No, I never doubted from the first that I was loved.

Then, in the young spring-time of the year, when primroses and violets were thick in hedge-bottoms, and the orchards were white with blossom, he met me one evening on the field-path by the river, and there, leaning over the gray moss-grown stile, he told me how dearly he loved me, and asked me to become his wife.

What could I answer but yes—a thousand times yes!

What a happy spring-tide was that of which Hugh's confession by the moss-grown stile was the sweet forerunner; and what a happy summer, following fleetly with winged footsteps, so that all too swiftly it was gone for ever! But I have no heart left to write about that time: it is an idyl whose pages are closed for ever; and it were well for me could its sweet rhythm be utterly forgotten. A week or two after Hugh had spoken to me, he took a lodging in Deepvale, by which means he was able to spend four or five evenings a week at our house. But let him come as often as he might, I never tired of his company; and if he ever grew tired of mine, he took care that no one should be aware of the fact but himself. We had many a pleasant walk and many a long talk together during those summer evenings, you may be sure. If there was one subject that Hugh was fonder of discussing than another when we were by ourselves, it was how, and in what way, we should dispose of my five hundred pounds. Hugh's one idea was to buy a business with it, and give up his present mode of life; while I was for leaving it in the bank, and trying to add a little to it every year; but our disputations always ended with a kiss, and a laugh at our castle-building; and we both agreed that it would be time enough to consider the question seriously after our marriage, which was fixed to take place in the course of the following spring; by which time the branch-line would be completed, and a week or two's holiday become possible for Hugh.

By the beginning of autumn, the Deepvale end of the branch-line was completed as far as Hugh and his men were concerned, and Hugh was obliged to change his quarters to Red Cross, a village about six miles away. He was still able to come two or three times a week to see me, for his work now lay so wide that his employers had been obliged to provide him with a horse, and it was little trouble for him to ride over of an evening, and stay an hour or two; besides which, he was often obliged to come on business; so that our courtship was not greatly interrupted by the change.

And all this time my happiness was without a flaw. Looking back now, and reading this lesson of my life by the light of after-events, I can see what a blind and trusting fool I was; I can bring to mind a thousand weather-signs, in which, had I not wilfully shut my eyes to all such monitors, I might have read the presage of coming shipwreck and disaster. But my confidence in the man was so complete, I trusted him so thoroughly, that no mere petty gossip, no vague hearsay of a third person, nothing short of evidence so complete and overwhelming that it could not be disputed, would have had power to shake, ever so slightly, my faith in his truth and honour. Carefully as he thought he had provided against every contingency, such evidence, alas! was forthcoming at last, and in a way that neither he nor I could ever have imagined.

A favourite walk of mine in fine weather was along the footpath which ran by the banks of the Dore, the little river which meandered through Deepvale, and formed such a pleasant feature of its scenery; and after my house-work for the day was over, I often used to ramble off, sometimes with Willie, sometimes alone, or with some favourite book only for a companion, and follow the windings of the stream till I was tired. For part of the way

that I used to go, the river was fringed with a thick growth of underwood and dwarf trees, close outside which ran the footpath. As I was one day hunting about for wild-flowers inside this shrubbery, I lighted on a wee fairy dell, wrought by Nature's own fingers, of which, after the fashion of all discoverers, I at once took possession. Here, seated on the moss-grown bole of an old tree, with my feet on a lump of rock, I could see the babbling river glance and shimmer close before me, while shut in in every other direction, with interlacing boughs of softest greenery, among which brooded many a twittering bird; here I passed happy hours, reading, sewing, or day-dreaming; and thinking much of that married life on whose duties and responsibilities I was now so soon to enter. I kept the secret of my fairy dell to myself; I never so much as took Willie there, nor did I ever speak of it to Hugh: I felt that it was good for me to have one place where I could be entirely alone: I would tell Hugh my secret after marriage, but not before.

Sitting *perdue* in my sylvan retreat one pleasant autumn afternoon, busily stitching, and as busily thinking, I was attracted by the sound of voices, apparently those of two men who were coming along the footpath outside. Presently I recognised the voice of one of them as that of Hugh Sanderson; and then I felt, rather than knew, that the other must be that of no less a person than Mr Pennington, one of the firm of contractors by whom Hugh was employed, and whom I had seen a few times at the station. It was Mr Pennington who was doing most of the talking, and from his loud harsh tones, I judged that he was very angry. 'I tell you plainly, Sanderson, that this sort of thing won't do,' he said. 'It is neither the first nor the second time that I have had occasion to warn you. Should it occur again, you and I must part. It is most discreditable to a person in your position to be seen drunk, as I saw you last Monday night. What an example to set to those under you!'

'It shall not occur again, Mr Pennington; I give you my word for it,' said Hugh.

'So be it; but do not forget the warning I have just given you. There's another thing, by the by, I want to mention to you. That woman—what's her name?—came pestering me again the other day, and complaining that she could get no assistance from you. Most disgraceful of you, Sanderson, if such is the case. Anyway, I can't be annoyed with her; and I must request that you will take steps to prevent her intruding on me again.'

Hugh's muttered reply was lost in the distance.

Hugh—my Hugh drunk! and on Monday night too! Why, at that very moment there was hidden in the bosom of my dress a note written by him, and received by me at noon on Tuesday, in which he stated that he had been unable to visit me on the preceding evening, according to promise, in consequence of having certain overwork to do. What was I to believe? What could I believe? However black the evidence might seem against him, at least I would not condemn him unheard. I would await his coming with what patience I might, and his own lips should say whether he were innocent or guilty. And who was that woman of whom Mr Pennington had spoken?

Just as I was putting to the shutters that evening, and before I had lighted the candles, Hugh strode into the little station-house as jauntily as ever he had done. 'If he will only confess, and not lie to me, I think I can forgive him everything,' I said

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to myself. Davy was busy at the station, and Willie in bed asleep.

He put his arm round my waist, and was going to stoop down and kiss me, as he always did when he came in and found me alone; but I turned aside my face, and uncoiled his arm, and pushed him quietly away.

'Hullo! what's the matter now?' he said. 'Out of sorts a little, eh?'

'Hugh Sanderson, I want a straightforward answer to a straightforward question,' I said. 'Where were you, and what were you doing, on Monday night?'

He started, but there was not light enough for me to see his face by. 'Where was I on Monday night, and what was I doing?' he said, repeating my question. 'Why, Susey, you little vixen, didn't you get the note I sent you on Tuesday, explaining why I was unable to come?'

'That is not a straightforward answer to my question,' I said. 'Why you did not come to see me I don't care to know; but I want you to tell me, how you were occupied on Monday night.'

'Why, working overtime, to be sure, as I told you in my note.'

'You lie, Hugh Sanderson!' I said. 'You were not working overtime; you were drunk.'

He fell back a step or two, and a terrible oath burst from his lips. A cold shudder ran through me as I heard him. 'Who told you that?' he exclaimed, seizing me savagely by the arm. 'Whoever it was, I'll tear out his lying tongue by the roots!'

'Never mind who told me, so long as it is the truth,' I replied. 'From this night, Hugh Sanderson, you and I are strangers to each other.'

In an instant, he was his old caressing self again, smiling, and shewing his white teeth, and looking as though he had never been out of temper in his life. 'Nay, nay, Susey, that will never do,' he said insinuatingly. 'You mustn't be too hard on a poor beggar. It's quite true that I did get a wee drop too much t'other night, as many a better man has done before me; and I didn't like to let my little puritan know what a beast I had made of myself. It's the first time in my life that I ever forgot myself that way, and—'

'Another lie!' I said doggedly. 'It's neither the first nor the second time that you have been drunk. But I want to hear no excuses from you; you go your way, and I'll go mine.'

'No, no, little one; the sentence is too severe,' he answered. 'You must forgive me this once, and I'll never offend again—on my soul, I won't! Those lips were made to kiss, not to pout in anger; those eyes—'

'Oh, go, go!' I cried, now thoroughly roused, and stamping my foot on the ground. 'Why don't you leave this room? Let me never see your face more. I tell you again that from tonight you and I are strangers.'

'What, really in earnest, my pretty Susannah?' he said with one of his mellow laughs. 'Well, I must obey instructions, I suppose. I go, but only for a little while. It would be too bad to dismiss your own Hugh for ever for the sake of one little mistake. You are too good-hearted for that, Susey. I'll leave you now, but I'll come again on Saturday, by which time I hope you will have found out how pleasant a thing it is to forgive your enemies, let alone those you love; and so good-bye for the present.'

He was gone at last. I sank into a chair, and drew my apron over my head, and burst into tears—the bitterest I had ever shed. 'So end all your fine love-dreams, Susannah Deriton!' I said to myself.

VISIBLE SPEECH.

MR ALEXANDER MELVILLE BELL has recently brought under the notice of the Society of Arts his very remarkable system of *Visible Speech* or *Universal Language*, intended to remove an absurdity which vitiates all ordinary alphabets and languages. This absurdity is the utter want of agreement between the appearance of a letter or word and the sound which it is intended to convey; between the visible form of the symbol and the sound and meaning of the thing symbolised; between (for instance) the shape of the letter C and the value of that letter in the alphabets which contain it. This is an old difficulty—how old, we do not know; but to understand the proposed remedy, it will be necessary to have a clear idea of the defect to which the remedy is to be applied.

Spoken language may, for aught we know, have had its origin in an attempt to imitate, by the organs of the voice, the different sounds which animate and inanimate nature present. Man could thus recall to the minds of those around him those notions of absent objects and past actions with which the sounds are connected. The expression of abstract qualities by the same means would be a later object, and one more difficult of attainment. When the *eye* instead of the ear had to be appealed to, or the signs rendered visible instead of audible, the system of hieroglyphics would at once suggest itself, by marking on a tablet or paper, a piece of ground or a smooth surface of sand, a rude picture of the object intended. When we get beyond these preliminary stages, however, the difficulty rapidly increases. There is no visible picture by which we could convey the meaning of such sentiments as are called in English *virtue*, *justice*, *fear*, and the like, except by so elaborate a composition as it would require an artist to produce; nor could an audible symbol for each of these sentiments be framed. It would take a Max Müller to trace how the present complication gradually arose. That there is a complication, any one may see in a moment. What is there in the shape of the five letters forming the word *table*, in these particular combinations of curved and straight lines, to denote either the sound of the word or the movements of the mouth and other vocal organs which produce its utterance? Nothing whatever. Any other combination of straight and curved lines might be made familiar by common use, and substituted for our plain English word, with as little attention to any analogy between the visible symbol and the sound of the thing symbolised.

Numerous attempts have been made to devise some sort of alphabet in which the shapes of the letters should in some way be dependent on the movements of the vocal organs—not actual pictures of them, but analogies, more or less complete. Without going to earlier labours, we may adduce those of Professor Willis. Nearly forty years ago, he shewed that the ordinary vowel sounds—*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*—are produced on regular acoustic principles; that 'the different vowel sounds may be produced artificially, by throwing a current of air upon a reed in a pipe; and that, as the pipe is lengthened

or shortened, the vowels are successively produced'—not in the order familiar to us, but in the order *i, e, a, o, u* (and with the continental sounds, *i* like *ee*, *e* like *ay*, *a* like *ah*, *u* like *oo*). Eighty or ninety years ago, Mr Kratzenstein contrived an apparatus for imitating the various vowel sounds. He adapted a vibrating reed to a set of pipes of peculiar forms. Soon afterwards, Mr Kempelen succeeded in producing the vowel sounds by adapting a reed to the bottom of a funnel-shaped cavity, and placing his hand in various positions within the funnel. He also contrived a hollow oval box, divided into two portions, so attached by a hinge as to resemble jaws; by opening and closing the jaws, he produced various vowel sounds; and by using jaws of different shapes, he produced imperfect imitations of the consonant sounds *l, m, and p*. By constructing an imitative mouth of a bell-shaped piece of caoutchouc, imitative nostrils of two tin tubes, and imitative lungs in the form of a rectangular windchest, he produced with more or less completeness the familiar sounds of *n, d, g, k, s, j, v, t, and r*. By combining these, he produced the words *opera, astronomy, &c.*; and the sentences *Vous êtes mon ami—Je vous aime de tout mon cœur*. By introducing various changes in some such apparatus as this, Professor Willis has developed many remarkable facts concerning the mode in which wind passes through the vocal organs during oral speech.

The useful work would be, however, not to imitate vocal sounds by means of mechanism, but to write them so that they should give more information as to their mode of production than our present alphabet affords. Such was the purport of the *Phonetic system*, which had a life of great activity from ten to twenty years ago, but which has since fallen into comparative obscurity. Mr Ellis and the Messrs Pitman published very numerous works, either printed in the phonetic language itself, or intended to develop its principles. Bible Histories, the New Testament, the Sermon on the Mount, *Pilgrim's Progress, Paradise Lost, Macbeth, The Tempest*—all were printed in the new form; and there were numerous works under such titles as *Phonetic or Phonographic Alphabets, Almanacs, Journals, Miscellanies, Hymn-books, Note-books, Primers, Lesson-books, and the like*. The intention was not so much to introduce new forms of letters, as new selections of existing letters to convey the proper sounds of words. There was an unfortunate publication, the *Fonetik Nuz*, which worked more harm than good to the system, seeing that it was made a butt for laughter and ridicule—more formidable to contend against than logical argument.

Mr Bell contemplates something more than this. He has been known in Edinburgh for twenty years in connection with numerous works relating to Reading, Spelling, Articulation, Orthoepey, Elocution, the Language of the Passions, the relations between Letters and Sounds, Logograms for Short-hand, and the like. As a writer and teacher on these subjects, he had felt, with many other persons, how useful it would be if we could have a system of letters of universal application; letters which, when learned in connection with any one language, could be vocalised with uniformity in every other. There are two obstacles to the attainment of this end: first, that the association between the existing letters and sounds is merely arbitrary; and second, that international uniformity of association is impracticable, because the sounds of different

languages, and their mutual relations, have not hitherto been ascertained with exactitude or completeness.

Mr Bell, as he tells us, feeling that all attempted collations of existing alphabets have failed to yield the elements of a complete alphabet, tried in a new direction. Instead of going to languages to discover the elements of utterance, he went to the apparatus of speech itself, endeavouring to classify all the movements of tongue, teeth, lips, palate, &c., concerned in the pronunciation of vocal sounds. By this means, he hoped to obtain, from the physiological basis of speech, an organic scale of sounds which should include all varieties, known and unknown. To transfer these sounds to paper, in the form of visible characters, a new alphabet was necessary. To have adopted letters from the Roman, Greek, or other alphabets, constructed on no common principle of symbolisation, would have been to introduce complexity and confusion, and to create a conflict between old and new associations. He therefore discarded old letters and alphabets of every kind. He set himself the task of inventing a new scheme of symbols, each of which should form a definite part of a complete design; insomuch that, if the plan of the alphabet were communicated by diagrams, each letter would teach its own sound, by expressing to the reader's eye the exact position of the sound in the physiological circuit. Could this object be attained, not only would there be a universal alphabet; there would be a scheme of letters *representative* of sounds, and not, like ordinary alphabets, associated with sounds only by arbitrary conventions.

Mr Bell believes that he has achieved this result, and his expositions before the Ethnological Society, the College of Preceptors, and the Society of Arts, have had for their object the presentation of various phases of the system. The fitness of the term *visible speech* may, he urges, be shewn by the analogy of an artist who, wishing to depict a laughing face, draws the lines of the face as seen under the influence of mirth; he depicts, in fact, *visible* laughter. Every passion and sentiment, emotion and feeling, has this kind of facial writing; and an idea of it might be expressed on paper by a picture of the muscular arrangements of the face, so that all persons seeing the symbols would have a common knowledge of their meaning. In forming any sound, we adjust the parts of the mouth to certain definite attitudes; and the sound is the necessary result of our putting the mouth in such a shape. If, then, we could represent the various positions of the mouth, we should have in those symbols a representation of the sounds which cannot but result from putting the mouth in the positions symbolised. Now, Mr Bell claims to have applied this system of symbolisation to every possible arrangement of the mouth; he claims that, whatever your language, and whether you speak a refined or a rustic dialect, he can 'shew, in the forms of his new letters, the exact sounds you make use of. If this be so, a Chinaman may read English, or an Englishman Chinese, without any difficulty or uncertainty, after he has learned to form his mouth in accordance with the directions given him by the letters. Nearly all the existing alphabets contain vestiges of a similar relation between letters and sounds—a relation which has nearly disappeared during the changes which alphabetic characters have gradually undergone. Mr Bell gave the following anecdote illustrating this

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relation. 'Shortly before I left Edinburgh, in the early part of last year, an elderly lady called on me, accompanied by two young ladies, who were going out to India as missionaries. The elderly lady had been for upwards of twenty years engaged in mission-work, and she spoke the language of the district like a native. Nevertheless, she could not teach the English girls to pronounce some of the peculiar sounds which she had acquired by habit. They had been for some time under her instruction, but they could not catch the knack of certain characteristic elements. Having heard of "Visible Speech," the lady called to solicit my assistance. I know nothing of the language she pronounced before me. Some of the sounds I had never heard in linguistic combinations, though, of course, I am acquainted with them theoretically. I saw the young ladies for half an hour, but this proved long enough to give them the power of pronouncing the difficult sounds which, while they did not know precisely what to do, they could not articulate. Strangely enough, since I came to reside in London, I heard a clergyman and former missionary, speaking of these very girls, remark on the great success with which they pronounced the Canarese language before they left this country; and the speaker knew nothing of their previous difficulty, or how it had been overcome.'

The system analyses all sounds according to the mode in which they are produced. The number of sounds discriminated in various languages amounts to several times the number of letters in the English alphabet; and even in English, although there are only twenty-six letters, there are at least forty different sounds. The Church Missionary Society employ nearly two hundred different letters or symbols in their several printed books; and the list is even then imperfect as regards many of the languages.

Mr Bell finds thirty symbols sufficient to denote all the two hundred varieties of vowel and consonant sounds. What kind of symbols they are, we do not know (for a reason presently to be explained); but he states that, while each elementary sound has its own single type to express it in printing, he requires only thirty actual types to express them as used in language. Each symbol has a name, which does not include the sound of the letter, but merely describes its form. The learner has thus at first only to recognise pictures. But the name of the symbol also expresses the arrangement of the mouth which produces the sound; so that, when the symbol is named, the organic formation of its sound is named at the same time. In order that thirty symbols may denote two hundred sounds, Mr Bell has adopted certain modes of classification. All vowels receive a common generic symbol; all consonants another; vocalicity and whisper have their respective symbols; so have inspiration, retention, and expulsion of breath; so have the touching and the vibration of the several vocal organs; so have the lips, the palate, the pharynx, the glottis, and the different parts of the tongue; so has the breathing of sounds through the nostrils, or through nearly closed teeth. There are thirty of these generic meanings altogether, and they are combined to make up letters, every part of every letter having a meaning. The thirty symbols need not be represented mechanically by exactly thirty types; they may be embodied in a larger or smaller number, according to taste or convenience: such of the symbols as together represent simple

elements of speech being properly combined in single types. 'The highest possible advantages of the system,' we are told, 'would be secured by extending the number of types to about sixty. At present, I and my sons—as yet the only experts in the use of visible speech—write the alphabet in a form that would be cast on between forty and fifty types, which is but little more than the number in an ordinary English fount, including diphthongs and accented letters. This number does not require to be exceeded in order to print, with typographic simplicity, the myriad dialects of all nations.'

Mr Bell pointed out the prospective usefulness of his system in telegraphic communication. The symbols of speech may, in all their varieties, be transmitted by telegraphy through any country, without the necessity for a knowledge of the language adopted on the part of the signaler. He would only have to discriminate forms of letters; he may be totally ignorant of the value of a single letter, and yet may convey the telegram so as to be intelligible to the person to whom it is virtually addressed. It is known that the telegrams from India now reach London in a sadly mutilated and unintelligible state, owing to their passing through the hands of Turkish and Persian agents who do not know the English alphabet; an evil which, it is contended, would be removed by the adoption of the new system.

The mode in which Mr Bell illustrated his method was curious and interesting. His son uttered a great variety of sounds—whispered consonants, vocal consonants, vowels, diphthongs, nasal vowels, interjections, inarticulate sounds, animal sounds, mechanical sounds—all of which are susceptible of being represented in printed or written symbols. Then, the son being out of the room, several gentlemen came forward and repeated short sentences to Mr Bell, some in Arabic, some in Persian, some in Bengali, some in Negro patois, some in Gaelic, some in Lowland Scotch, some in Norfolk dialect; Mr Bell wrote down the sounds as he heard them, without, except in one or two cases, knowing the purport of the words. The son was called in, and, looking attentively at the writing, repeated the sentences with an accuracy of sound and intonation which seemed to strike those who were best able to judge as being very remarkable.

There is something a little tantalising in the present state of the subject. We know that there is a system of symbols, but we do not know the symbols themselves. Mr Bell states that, besides the members of his own family, only three persons have been made acquainted with the symbols, and the details of their formation—namely, Sir David Brewster, Professor de Morgan, and Mr Ellis. He has not intended, and does not intend, to secure his system to himself by any kind of patent or copyright; and yet, if he made it fully public at once, he would lose any legitimate hold over it to which he is rightfully entitled. He has submitted his plan to certain government departments, but has found that it is 'nobody's business' to take up a subject which is not included in any definite sphere of duty. He has next endeavoured to interest scientific societies in the matter, so far as to induce them to urge the trial of his plan by the government. He says: 'I am willing to surrender my private rights in the invention *pro bono publico*, on the simple condition, that the cost of so introducing the system may be undertaken at the public

charge.' Teachers there must be; because 'the publication of the theory of the system and the scheme of symbols must necessarily be supplemented by oral teaching of the scales of sounds, in order that the invention may be applied with uniformity.' The reading of the paper gave rise to some discussion at the Society of Arts, not as to the value and merit of the system itself, but as to anything which the Society can do in the matter. It is one rule of the Society, that no new invention shall be brought forward without a full explanation of the *modus operandi* as well as of the leading principles; and in this case, the objection lay that the inventor declined to make public, unless under some government agreement, the actual secret of his method. Mr Bell replied that, if even he were to write a sentence in view of the audience, it would add very little to their real knowledge of the subject; but, he furthermore said, he was ready to explain the details of the system to any committee whom the Council of the Society, or any other scientific body, may appoint. To us it appears that neither Mr Bell nor the Society is open to blame in the matter; he has the right to name the conditions under which he will make his system public; while they have the right to lay down rules for the governance of their own proceedings. The results actually produced struck the auditors generally with surprise; and there can be little doubt that the system will in some way or other, at all events, work itself into public notice.

M I R K A B B E Y.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—OUT OF THE CAGE.

THE immense ball-room was now a blaze of light, and full, though by no means crowded, with brilliant company. One of the windows, as Steve had said, had been thrown up, and through it the scene was as distinctly displayed to Ralph as though he were within. He stood there alone, for a feeling of respect kept others from the immediate neighbourhood. He beheld fair Letty, hostess and belle in one, moving from group to group, who broke out into smiles at her approach; he beheld dark Rose whirl by 'in gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls'—the self-same 'parure' which had enslaved poor Anne Rees—and followed by many an admiring eye. He beheld Master Walter's smiling face bent down to whisper to some blushing girl, who forgot, perhaps, for the moment that the handsome captain was already married—that he had been entrapped by that scheming young person with the extremely self-confident manner. Lastly, he beheld the man he sought talking with a gentleman of apoplectic habit, and the air of a prosperous licensed victualler, but who was no less a personage than the Earl of Marrobone, and Lord-lieutenant of Wheatshire. His Lordship had sought the open window for fresh air, and the two were conversing upon county matters, in which Sir Richard, young as he was, already took the keenest interest.

'You will take your seat on the bench at once, Sir Richard, I hope,' were the first words which Derrick caught. 'Your commission is, of course, already made out, and you will probably receive it to-morrow.'

'I thank you, my Lord. Yes, I shall make a point of being a regular attendant at the petty sessions.'

'And you will be wanted, too, at Dalwynch;

for between ourselves, the old general yonder is a little past his work in that way. I don't wish to prejudice you, I am sure, against a man in such a respectable position; but the fact is, he and I are not such good friends as we might be. He wants me to make Mr Chesham—you know, of course, who that is, the relation in which they stand to one another, and so on—a magistrate for the county. Now, I do think that that is a distinction which should never be conferred upon any natural son—that is, unless the family of the father should be really of mark, which is not the case with our friend the general, whatever may be said of Lady Theresa. I don't think, because a man has married into the peerage, that he should therefore be himself admitted to all the privileges of good birth.'

'With all deference, my Lord,' returned Sir Richard stiffly, 'I consider that under no circumstances whatever, no matter whether the father be peer or commoner, should the commission of the peace be conferred upon a bastard.'

'Then Richard Liscard must never sit upon the bench at Dalwynch!' exclaimed a malignant voice close beside the speaker.

In an instant, Sir Richard was upon the lawn without, face to face with his insulter. No one in the ball-room, save the two gentlemen who had been conversing together, had overheard the exclamation, and his Lordship had not caught it distinctly. The band was playing on, and as accurately as before, and the dancers were dancing in tune; the cavaliers were whispering their soft nothings, and the ladies making their sweet replies, while the two men without—the one so scrupulously appared in the latest fashion, the other dishevelled, travel-stained, and in all respects what we call 'a Rough,' but both as brave as lions—were grappling one another by their throats. Sir Richard, who never forgot any man's face—a faculty not uncommon with persons of his class and character—had recognised Ralph Derrick, the turbulent interloper in his parish, the evil counsellor of his brother, at the first glance; and enraged at his audacious trespass at such a time, quite as much as by his late brutal insult to himself, which he set down as the result of drink, he threw himself upon the gold-digger with the utmost fury. The Earl of Marrobone stepped outside also, and closed behind him the ball-room window; the stout old nobleman was one of the coolest hands in England, and never lost his presence of mind. Even thus debarred from making that public exposure of the young baronet which Derrick had promised himself, he might have said something which his Lordship would not have forgotten—for he was one of those who had seen too much of the world to believe anything untrue merely because it seemed impossible—but that, at the first touch of Sir Richard's fingers, Ralph's fury deprived him of all utterance except a few desperate imprecations. He would have liked, with folded arms, to have impeached the young baronet as a base-born impostor (for he felt convinced that the reason for my Lady's flight was known to him and the rest of the family), and have stated his own wrongs in a few earnest and pregnant words before the whole company in yonder room; but now that he had his enemy so close, 'the blind wild beast of force within him, whose home is in the sinews of a man,' was driven to strike and strike again. So the precious half-minute that elapsed

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before help came to Sir Richard, was wasted, and Derrick found himself helpless, and with his wrongs untold, in the clutch of half-a-dozen men, and one of them the village policeman, whom Steve had found at last, and despatched for that very purpose.

'Take him and lock him up,' exclaimed Lord Marrobone, perceiving that Sir Richard was too excited to speak. 'A night in the watch-house will sober the drunken brute, and cool his courage. Take him away, I say,' for Ralph began to weave afresh his choicest flowers of speech—mere onion-ropes of the wickedest words—and put the foul-mouthed scoundrel into quod!' So they bore Ralph forth, not without very rough treatment, through the gates, and cast him into a small but well-secured tenement, known as 'the Cage,' but so seldom used in the orderly little village, that it was in the occupation of a certain white rabbit and her family (pets of the constable's children), who had to be ejected, to make room for this very different tenant.

Sir Richard Lisgard went up stairs to refit, and returned to the ball-room, where none had even remarked his absence, with an unimpeachable white cravat concealing an ugly bruise upon his windpipe; but all smiles had departed from his noble features, and it was observed by Mrs Walter Lisgard, in confidential conversation with the Honourable Poppin Jay, that her dear brother-in-law looked more like Don Quixote de la Mancha even than usual. He had made up his mind that, under the circumstances, it was impossible he could be upon the bench of magistrates while Derrick's case was being entered into, and was disturbed by the apprehension that the old general would not look upon the matter in a sufficiently important light, or punish the offender with all the rigour of the law.

By no means quietly, however, had the affair passed off without doors. There was nothing, according to rumour, which drunken Derrick had not done in the way of misbehaviour towards the young baronet, from bad words to the use of a bowie-knife, and nothing which he did not deserve. The news flew from mouth to mouth like wild-fire; the tenantry, the peasantry, and the household were all in possession of the facts—and of very much more than the facts, within half an hour of their real or supposed occurrence. Last of all to hear it was Mistress Forest, for whom a wholesome respect was entertained by all the domestics, and to whom, being notoriously the object of Derrick's affections, it was of course a delicate matter to communicate such intelligence. Little Anne Rees, however, stole up stairs to Mary's own room, where she knew my Lady's waiting-maid was sitting, far from all the noise and gaiety, and thinking sadly of her poor dear mistress and her troubles. 'O ma'am, please ma'am, such a dreadful thing have happened!' said she. 'Mr Derrick have come back again.—Don't ye faint; don't ye take on so' (for Mistress Forest had turned as white as Anne's own apron); 'he's not dead. But he's gone and pitched into Sir Richard before all the company, and they fought together dreadful, I don't know how long.'

'What did he say, girl?' exclaimed Mistress Forest eagerly; 'I mean, what did they fight about?'

'Well, he did not say much, didn't Mr Derrick, beyond cursing most uncommon strong. It took six on 'em to carry him away, for all the world like a corpse, except for his kicking and swearing;

and when they said he would be up before the bench on Thursday, he said "He wished it was to-morrow, that was all;" and at the same time he laughed that wicked, that it went quite cold to the small of my back.'

'And where have they put the poor man, after all?'

'In the Cage, ma'am. The key was not to be found, but they've barred him up just like a wild beast. And oh, Mistress Forest, it isn't my place, and I ask your pardon, but don't you give him no more encouragement, for he is a wild beast, and nothing less, if you could only see him.'

'That will do, Anne; though I'm obliged to you for coming to tell me. I must speak to Sir Richard to-morrow, and try and beg him off. Good-night.'

'And aren't you coming down to supper, nor to see the fireworks, nor nothing?' inquired the little maid in amazement.

'No, Anne; I was not in a humour for such things before, and certainly I am not so now. I am going to bed.'

But no sooner had the grateful little girl—who, though she waited no longer on Mrs Walter (who had brought her own maid with her), yet always remembered that she owed her enfranchisement to Mistress Forest—gone down stairs, than Mary took up her bonnet and cloak, and hurried softly after her. It was impossible not to meet persons at every turn; but it was not difficult, in the general hubbub and excitement, to avoid their observation; and this she did. The night was very dark; and once away from the gleam and glitter of the house and lawn, Mary had to slacken her pace even down the avenue she knew so well. When she was half-way down it, as nearly as she could guess, she heard a noisy throng of men approaching from the other direction, and shrank on one side, behind a tree. Some of them carried lanterns, and as they went by, she recognised Styles, the rural policeman, and also Mr Steve.

'I am as sorry as can be,' the latter was saying, 'and would much rather see the poor fellow well away.'

'Take care you go no further than wishing, however,' responded the guardian of the law. 'It would be a bad night's work for any man who should let that fellow out, mind you: ordered into custody by the Lord-lieutenant himself, and charged with assault and battery of a baronknight—I never set eyes on such an owdacious scamp.'

'He's simply mad, that's all,' returned Steve, sadly—'mad with drink. For whoever heard one in his senses, or even drunk in a natural way, talk such infernal rubbish! Didn't he say he was "my Lady's" husband?'

The answer was drowned in a great shout of laughter, and so the men passed on. Mary waited until she was sure there were no more to come, then walked on with her arms outstretched before her, as fast as she dared go. Suddenly there was a sharp and rusty shriek behind her, and a glare of lurid light which shewed her the gateway right in front.

'They have begun to fire the rockets,' muttered she; 'so there will be nobody in the village, that is certain.' The little street, much lighter than the way by which she had hitherto come, was indeed quite empty, but by no means noiseless; a sound of confused shouting came dully up from the bottom of the hill, where, as she well knew,

the Cage was situated; and truly, as Anne Rees had said, it struck upon the ear like the roaring of some angry beast making night hideous. Mary stopped for a moment to listen; and when she went on, her face was paler, though not less determined-looking than before.

'Sir Richard is a bastard—a bastard—a bastard! My Lady is not nearly so good as she should be; and I'm her husband in the lock-up! Down with the Lisgards—down with them; and down they shall come!'

These were the words, but interspersed with the most hideous imprecations, with which Mistress Forest's ears were greeted as she approached the little round house. Taking advantage of a momentary pause in the stream of denunciation, she knocked with her clenched hand at the nail-studded door.

'Sir Richard is a bastard! no more Sir Richard than you are!' shrieked the voice within. 'Be sure you go to the magistrates' meeting at Dalwynch on Thursday, and let all Mirk go with you; then shall you see pride have a fall, and the Lisgards come down with a run! Down with them—down with them—and down they shall come!'

'Ralph—Ralph Derrick, it is me.'

'Who's me? a woman?' inquired the prisoner eagerly. 'Then I'll tell you about my Lady, because you'll enjoy it. She's *not* my Lady; she's no more my Lady than you are.'

'Ralph Gavestone, I know that,' answered Mistress Forest, with her mouth glued to a crack in the door.

'Oh, you know that, do you? Then you must be the devil, whom I have lately suspected to be of the female gender, and am now convinced of it. You are of course aware, then, that I am her husband?'

'Yes, I am.—Will you be quiet, and go away to Dalwynch, and not try to enter the Abbey grounds again this night, if I let you out?'

'Certainly. To-day is Tuesday, or it was so before midnight. I shall therefore have to wait for my revenge till Thursday, if I am not set free; whereas, if you let me out, I can go to work at once; I can see an attorney to-morrow morning. That should please you rarely, if you are indeed the devil. There's another bolt still over the hole through which I kicked Steve's leg. I left my mark on some of them, mind you—R. G.'

Mary Forest had opened the Cage; and behold there stood her whilom lover, bleeding and ragged, his red beard plucked a thousand ways, his features haggard, his eyes flaming with rage and hate.

'Oh, it's you, is it?' said he, with something of softness in his turbid but vehement speech. 'I might have known that, if I had thought a little. But it's no good, my partridge—plump still, though a little gray. I'm meat for your mistress now; I am the master of Mirk; or at least I shall be in a day or two. I'm her Ladyship's husband—better luck than she deserves, you'll think; and I can't be two women's husband at the same time, any more than my Lady could have two mates. That was her little mistake, for which she's about to reap the fruits. Sir Richard is a bastard—a bastard—a bastard!'

'You said that if I unbarred this door, you would start for Dalwynch,' observed Mistress Forest firmly. 'You used to be a man whose word could be relied on. Why do you not go?'

'I am going at once, my plump one. You have revenged yourself and me at the same time. There is no kindness in this, I well understand, you know; there is no such thing as kindness in the world.'

'You are wrong there, Ralph Gavestone. It is because I love my mistress, rather than pity you—although I *do* pity you still—that I have come hither to save you from a night's lodging in such a place. It would have grieved my mistress to the heart to think you were so served, I know.'

'To the *what*?' returned Ralph with a savage laugh. 'To her heart, did you say? Why, the thing doesn't exist, wench! If, however, there does still cling to her anything of the sort, when I tell them that Sir Richard's a bastard, that'll bring it.'

'Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall receive mercy,' cried Mistress Forest, terrified at the deadly menace of his tone, and uttering her words as though they were a charm against an evil spirit.

'Blessed are the merciful!' echoed Ralph bitterly. 'That may be so, for I have never known them; but cursed are the treacherous and the false! You have heard of the avenging angel—well, though my wings are so tattered and torn just now, that's me. Do you see the mimic lightning yonder over the Abbey? It will be stricken to-morrow from turret to basement by a forked shaft. Down with the Lisgards, and down they shall come!'

Shrieking this to a sort of frenzied measure, he suddenly broke away, and took the Dalwynch road, up Mirkland Hill. Mary listened with some feeling of relief to his fading strains, then sighed, and wiped from her eyes a few honest tears.

'He was not always a bad man, I am sure,' soliloquised she pitifully, 'and now God forgive him—he knows not what he's doing! He is mad.'

CHAPTER XXXVII.—THE RECONCILIATION.

The day after a great festivity in a great house is generally a dull one. It begins late; for both servants and guests are wearied, and there is nothing about it which is not inferior to other days except the luncheon, which in the way of 'sweets,' at all events, is always exceptionally good. Sir Richard, however, who went through life as nearly as could be to an automaton, was up at his usual time; and descending to the empty breakfast-room, beheld, seated in an arm-chair which he had wheeled to the window, a little wizened old man, in brightest Hessian boots, drab breeches, and a cut-away coat with flap-pockets of the fashion of half a century ago.

'Dr Haldane!' exclaimed the young man in extreme amazement. 'God bless my soul and body!'

'I hope he will, sir,' rejoined the visitor drily, extending three fingers somewhat stiffly.

'No, sir; surely your whole hand!' cried the baronet warmly. 'Your face is the pleasantest sight—save that of my dear mother's—that I could hope to set eyes on in Mirk Abbey; and I am not going to be fobbed off with such a salutation as that.'

'You get nothing more from me, Richard, unless the business I have come about—very much against the grain, I can tell you—gets satisfactorily accomplished.'

'Does it relate to my dear mother, sir?'

Chambers's
May 12, 1884

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'Of course it does, young man. What else do you think would have had power to break my resolution—to bring me hither—to this room, in which I have not set foot these twenty years, and where I last sat, side by side with — But what is that to you? I suppose a man is not very likely to be moved by the memories of a dead father, who pays no respect to the feelings of his living mother.'

'I am not aware, Dr Haldane,' began Sir Richard with some haughtiness —

'I know that, sir,' broke in the other impetuously. 'You are so wrapped up in selfishness—you and that scampish brother of yours—that neither of you have any thought except for your own miserable quarrels. You were not aware, I dare say, that their constant repetition is driving your mother into her grave, as they have already driven her from her once happy home; and it is because you don't know it—because you won't see it—that I am come hither, once for all, to inform you of the fact. But perhaps such a little matter has no interest in your eyes: in which case I assure you, since it is entirely for her sake, and not at all for yours, that I have come, I shall be exceedingly glad to go away again.'

'Have you any message to deliver, Dr Haldane,' asked the baronet with an angry flush, 'direct from my mother, or are you merely stating your own doubtless valuable, but quite unasked-for opinions?'

'I have a message from her to deliver to you, and to the rest of you, young man; and if you think it worth while to send for your brother and sister, you had better do so.'

The young man rang the bell, and gave the necessary orders. Dr Haldane took up a book of family prayers that lay beside him, and grunted cynically as he read Sir Richard's name on the title-page. 'What a work for a fellow like this to write his name in, who drives his mother out of her own house!' muttered he, and then affected to be immersed in the contents. The baronet did not reply, but occupied himself in opening his letters, one of which was from Madame de Castellan. That lady expressed herself as 'desolated' at the news of her old friend's departure from the Abbey, the cause of which she was dying to hear. 'If, however,' ran the postscript, 'the absence of my lady was for any reason likely to continue, might not Mary Forest be despatched, at all events in the meantime, to Belcomb, where Madame was absolutely without any waiting-maid at all—with the exception of old Rachel—until another could be procured from France, to supply the place of wicked Annette, departed almost without a word of warning.'

'Cunning old wretch!' murmured Sir Richard, crumpling up the pale thin paper with its scratchy foreign caligraphy, and throwing it into the grate. 'She thinks of nothing but herself.'

'How odd!' exclaimed the little doctor bitterly. 'The lady's case must be quite unique.'

Not a word more was spoken by either until Letty entered, a little pale, but looking exquisitely lovely.

'Dear Dr Haldane, who would have thought of seeing you here? How pleased I am!'

The doctor rose with alacrity from his seat, and kissed her affectionately upon the forehead.

'I am sure,' said she with earnest gravity, 'that you have brought us news of dearest mamma.'

'So you have thought of her, have you, little one?' answered he fondly. (Letty was about three inches taller than the doctor.) 'I fancied she would have been no longer missed. Everybody was so happy here yesterday, I am told; and everything went on so well without her.'

'It did not, indeed,' returned Letty indignantly. 'Nothing seemed to go right in her absence, notwithstanding all I could do; and as for being happy, I can answer for myself and my brothers, that not five minutes elapsed all day without our thinking of her, and grieving for her loss. And oh, dear Dr Haldane, do you know why she has left us in this sad manner, and when we shall see her back again?'

'I have her own explanation of why she has left Mirk Abbey,' replied the doctor; 'but as for her return, that will depend upon yourself—I mean upon Sir Richard and Captain Lisgard. For you, Letty, she bids me say have been at all times what a loving child should be to a parent—Master Walter, your servant, sir.—No; I will not shake hands with a man who ruins his mother by gambling debts, and breaks her heart with hatred of his own brother.'

'That is not true, at least, I do hope, Walter?' said Sir Richard quickly.

'No; false, upon my honour,' returned the captain. 'My mother never told you to say that, sir.'

'Not quite that—no, she did not,' admitted the little old man, whose eyes had begun to lose their hard and inexorable expression, notwithstanding his harsh words from the moment that Walter entered the room. It was so difficult even for a social philosopher to be severe and stern with that young man. 'Yet I am bound to say, Walter, that it is you who have been most to blame with respect to that good mother, who only lives but for her children, and whose very love for them has compelled her to withdraw herself from beneath this roof. I will not now dwell upon your clandestine marriage; I leave yourself to imagine how the want of trust in your best friend as well as parent evinced in that hasty step must have wounded her loving heart. Nor do I wish—that is to say, your mother herself requests me not to bear hardly upon you with respect to your gambling debts. You know the full extent of them perhaps—yes, I was afraid of that—better than she does even yet; but she has paid enough of them already to seriously embarrass her own affairs.'

'I have made a solemn promise never to bet or gamble more, Dr Haldane,' said the captain hoarsely.

'I am glad of it, Walter; but what I was about to say was, that in this case, as well as in that of your marriage, it was not so much the error itself, as the want of frankness evidenced by your concealment of the matter. To be ashamed of having done wrong, is a proper feeling enough; but if it be not accompanied by the acknowledgment of the offence, it only shews one to be a coward, not a penitent. However, bad as your conduct has been in these two particulars, your mother would doubtless have done her best to forget, as she hastened in both instances to forgive it. But what she could not forget, since it happened every day and every hour, were the quarrels between yourself and your brother.' Here the doctor turned sharply round on the young baronet, who had been hitherto listening, not, perhaps, without complacency, to the catalogue of his brother's misdeeds.—

'I think, from what I have seen myself, Richard, that it is *you* who are most in fault here. It is no use your looking proud and cold on me. I never cared three brass farthings for such airs, though they now and then misbecame even your poor father, who was worth a dozen of you. But this ridiculous assumption of superiority—founded upon mere accident of birth—naturally offends a high-spirited young man like Walter, who, if he was in your place, would certainly not make himself odious in that way, however he might fail in other matters belonging to your position, which suffers nothing, I readily allow, in your able hands. That you have the administrative faculty in a high degree, sir, I concede; but this is not Russia, and if it were, you are not the Czar.'

'No man in Mirk ever called me a tyrant, Dr Haldane.'

'Perhaps no man ever dared, sir; but I dare to say that a son whose conduct is such that his mother can no longer bear to witness it, is something worse than a tyrant. And be sure that if you continue so to behave, you will never see her face under this roof again.'

'My God, but this is very horrible!' cried Sir Richard, striking his forehead. 'I had no idea—I never dreamed that matters were coming to any such pass as this.—Walter—brother, did it seem to you that we were so very like to Cain and Abel?'

The two young men embraced, perhaps for the first time in their lives.

'Oh, when you tell her what you have seen, sir, do you think my mother will come back?' cried Richard, with the tears in his fine eyes.

'I cannot say that; I am sure, however, that she will be greatly comforted. May I tell her that this is not a mere impulse of the moment, but that you are resolved from this time forth to be brothers indeed?'

'I will do my very best, Walter.'

'And I mine, Richard,' answered the other. 'Don't reproach yourself like that—for the vast frame of his elder brother shook with sobs—it is much more my fault than yours: and you have been very good to me about my debts; kinder than most fellows in your position would have been—yes, you have, Dick; yes, you have. How very, very long it is since I have called you Dick; not since we were at school together! You used to call me Watty, then, you know.'

'Yes, Watty; yes. I had almost forgotten it. Let us go to our mother at once, lad—as we used to do when we made up our quarrels in the old times—and ask her to come back again, and take her place here, where we all miss her so much.—Where is she, Dr Haldane?'

'I don't know—that is, I may not tell, my boy,' returned the old gentleman hesitatingly, who, with Letty's hand fast clasped in his, was staring out of window as hard as he could, but his eyes were very dim.

'Have you nothing more to tell us, sir?' asked Sir Richard humbly.

'Well, no, boys. The letter'—

'The letter!' ejaculated Letty; 'I remember now that dear mamma told me herself that when this very thing should come to pass—although I little knew at the time to what she was alluding—we should find a letter in her desk.'

'It is not there now: she put it into my hands, and I—I tore it up,' observed the doctor. 'I have told you faithfully all that it contained, with one

exception. I do not choose to speak of that, dear Letty, and I have your mother's permission not to do so.'

'Let me speak of it, then,' said Sir Richard, stealing his arm round his sister's waist, and kissing her very tenderly. 'The message the doctor will not give respects yourself, dear, and his son Arthur. My foolish pride'—

'Pride, indeed!' broke in the little old man impetuously; 'your confounded impertinence, I call it.'

'Very well, doctor,' continued the baronet smiling; 'let it be so, if you will. I had the audacity to suppose, Letty, that Mr Arthur Haldane was not good enough for you.'

'Nor is he,' contested the little doctor with irritation. 'Nobody's good enough for Letty Lisgard. But he is as good as can be found in England, that I will say, though the young man is my own son. And if he does not make you a pattern husband, I'll cut him off with a shilling.'

'I shall be glad to give you away to such an honest fellow, Letty,' said the baronet warmly; 'so let that matter be considered settled.'

It was very pleasant to see the blushing girl hiding her tearful face in the old man's arms. 'O mamma, mamma,' murmured she, 'how happy I should be if you were but with us!'

'Well, well, that will be soon, I hope, my dear,' said the doctor, patting her silken head. 'I will do all I can on my part to persuade her: I am sure I shall make her happy with this news.'

'Yes; but in the meantime,' said Letty, 'how terrible it must be for her to be all alone. If you know where she is, can you not at least send Forest to be with her?'

'No, no; but, by the by, I have forgotten to do your mother's bidding with respect to that very person. She expressly desired that until her own return to Mirk, Mary may be sent to Belcomb, where Madame de Castellan is just now in saddest need of her.'

'Ay, she writes to me that she has lost her French maid,' said Sir Richard, picking up the crumpled note: 'in that case, Mary had better go off at once.'

'There is worse trouble at Belcomb than that,' remarked the doctor gravely. 'That poor fellow Derrick, who, I hear, made so much disturbance at the *fête* yesterday, has met with a sad accident.'

'Why, the man was put in the Cage quite safe,' said Sir Richard.

'Yes; but unfortunately for himself, he was let out again, and starting in the dark over Mirkland Hill, whole drunk, and half mad, the poor wretch wandered into the mill-yard.'

'Through that gap in the wall!' exclaimed the baronet with excitement. 'Didn't I say the very last time we went by, that some accident would happen there, through that man Hathaway's neglect?'

'Well, it has happened now, with a vengeance,' pursued the doctor drily. 'I was sent for this morning at two o'clock, to Belcomb, where this poor fellow had been carried, because it was a better place for him to lie in than the mill. Hathaway had been working over-time, it seems; the sails were going till near midnight, and the story is that this poor fellow strayed beneath them, and was absolutely taken up and carried round; but, at all events, he lies there, very ill—dying, I think—with concussion of the brain, and Heaven knows

what beside. I dare not move him even to examine his ribs.'

'Good God! what can we do for him?' exclaimed Sir Richard. 'Is there nothing we can send?'

'He has everything he requires, or that he ever will have need of, poor fellow, in this world. But old Rachel is not a good hand at nursing, while Madame de Castellani, although good-natured enough—for a Frenchwoman—is quite incapable of such a task; so you couldn't do better than send Mary, as Madame has requested, though little knowing how much she would have need of her: her assistance will be invaluable, and indeed some sort of help must be had at once. I am going over there myself immediately, and will take her in my gig, if you can spare her, Miss Letty, and will tell her to get ready.'

'By all means,' cried Letty, hastily leaving the room upon that errand.

'Of course, all notion of prosecuting this poor fellow is now put out of the question, whatever happens,' observed the doctor.

'Quite so—quite so,' answered the baronet eagerly. 'Poor drunken wretch; I am sure I'm very sorry. And I tell you what, Dr Haldane, if this man dies, there should be some sort of deodand laid upon that Mill. Hathaway ought to be punished for wilful neglect.'

'That won't bring the poor man to life again, though,' observed the doctor.

'No, of course not; though, if one may be allowed to say so, he really led such a sad life, by all accounts, it seems almost as well that he should end it. It would be a happy release, I mean, if he was to die, poor fellow; don't you think so?'

'Yes, I do. It would be better for himself, and better for others,' returned the doctor very gravely.

'Just so,' said Sir Richard; 'better for all concerned. Poor man!'

IMPERIAL ROME.

ANCIENT Rome, even under the splendid rule of that great builder, the Emperor Augustus, never could boast quays and boulevards like Paris, parks like London, nor squares like Berlin. A congeries of hills, intersected by narrow winding valleys, and bordering on a swift narrow river, fed by mountain streams, could never afford space for streets like Regent Street, or squares like the Place de la Concorde. The *Vicus Longus*, according to the best modern writer* on Roman topography since Papencordt, Gregorovius, and Ampère, ran between the Quirinal and Viminal hills, was only about three-quarters of a mile long, and ended in mean suburban houses. The lesser streets were narrow and short, never more than fifteen feet wide; while the alleys were not more than a yard across, being, in fact, just such cut-throat passages as still intersect the Corso, that great artery of modern Rome. The enormous houses, the height of which Augustus reduced to seventy feet, were let in flats, like the eight-story buildings still existing in the Old Town of Edinburgh; and as many of the garret mountaineers threw out balconies from their windows, the lower stories were cool, but dismally dark; the blue sky was hidden, and the sun was a stranger to the underlings, who, however, considered the close atmosphere and shadow

of these alleys favourable to health. Horace and Juvenal both speak bitterly of the dirt and tumult of Rome, of the dangerously crowded streets, and the danger of falling houses.

The summits of the seven hills belonged to the patricians, and were devoted to gardens and temples. The only parts within the circuit of the ancient Servian walls where Caius or Codrus could breathe the air, were the *Circus Maximus*, the *Forum Boarium*, and the *Forum Romanum*. After emerging from the stifling lanes, choked-up alleys, and mountain-walls of houses, the Roman citizen must have drunk down the sunshine with delight in the great *Circus*, three-eighths of a mile long, and a furlong broad, and with the towering buildings of the *Palatine* and *Aventine* hills looking down upon him. But the *Capitol* was the true centre of Rome's religion, power, glory, and wealth.

Let us place ourselves for a moment in the age of Augustus and on the highest part of the *Via Sacra*, where the Arch of Titus now stands. Rome's splendour and pride break full upon us. On the northern summit of the *Capitol Hill* stands the vast temple of *Jupiter Optimus Maximus*, *Juno*, and *Minerva*. Its gilded tiles repel the golden darts of the fierce Italian sun; the sky, of deepest sapphire, burns with the intense heat that scorches the Grecian pillars of the portico, the statuary of the pediment, and the triple marble statues. Near this temple rises a colossal statue of *Jupiter*, and hard by there is also a giant figure of *Apollo*. The smaller temples of *Honour*, *Virtue*, and *Fortune*, guarded by groves of statues, also adorn the hill of the Citadel; while on the southern summit is the temple of *Juno Moneta*.

Near the *Summa Sacra Via*, where we are supposed to be standing, are some of the most ancient monuments of Rome—the *Ædes Larium*, and that temple of *Jupiter Stator* that was founded by *Romulus*. Opposite these, is that market for fruit and toys to which *Ovid* and *Propertius* have alluded. In the time of Augustus, the *Forum* was thirty feet deeper than it is now. Cities, like churchyards, rise in the course of centuries, as the ground gets more encumbered with debris. The hills which enclose the *Forum* are now only one hundred feet high, they must have gained nobility by the addition of a sixth part to their altitude.

Let us now mount the hill of the *Capitol*, the crest of which is lined by a double row of arcades, one above the other. This is the *Tabularium* of *Catulus*. On a high terrace to the north, stands a temple of *Concord*; and to the south, on a lower level, a temple of *Saturn*. In front of the latter is the gilt *Milliarium*, set up by Augustus as a standard for distances within the walls; behind, is the small temple to *Ops*; and to the left, in the corner, is the *Schola Xantha*—probably the office of the *ædile* and his scribes. Over and beyond it rise the *arx* and the temple of *Juno*. On the eastern face of this portion of the hill, and visible from the *Forum*, is the *Tarpeian Rock*, where criminals were executed and traitors thrown down headlong. At the upper end of the *Forum*, below the *Citadel Hill*, was the *Comitium*, the sacred quarter-deck of the whole enclosure of this open-air Westminster Hall of Rome. Here stood the tribunal of the *Prætor Urbanus*, as well as one of the *Rostra*, and a great many statues. A sacred fig-tree, under which *Romulus* and *Remus* had been suckled, was shewn in this part of the *Forum*. Some of the boundary-

* *History of the City of Rome, its Structure and Monuments.* By Thomas H. Dyer, LL.D. Longman, 1866.

walls of the Comitium were adorned with fresco-paintings, that had been brought from Sparta. Near the south-western end of the Forum rose the splendid Basilica Julia, erected by Cæsar; and higher to the east was the temple of Castor. The latter stood on what at first almost seemed a spur of the Palatine Hill, but what was really a huge terrace, twenty-four feet high, formed of cyclopean masses of tufa and Alban stone. The steps of this temple served the purpose of rostra from which to address the people. Near this building stood the *Ædes Vestæ*, a little round shrine standing in a grove near the Tiber. At no great distance from the present Arch of Severus, was the celebrated bronze temple of the two-faced Janus, whose doors were closed in peace, and opened in war. Near this and the Basilica *Æmilia*, Augustus built his *Chalcidicum*, supposed to be an open space for the use of the senators, and surrounded by a colonnade. Near this was the Senate-house; and before that stood the *Rostra*, or columns adorned with the beaks of captured galleys.

But let us pass on to the *Campus Martius*, the parade-ground and park of ancient Rome. It is a vast grassy plain, bounded by the winding Tiber, intersected by the *Via Flaminia*, bordered with villas, and with a blue horizon of gently-rising hills—to the right the *Pincian*, and to the left the *Vatican*. It was in the *Campus*, when there were no inundations, that the great horse-races were held twice a year. Here the legionaries paraded or assembled to prepare for triumphal processions. It was also the play-ground for the robust youth of Rome; here, half stripped, they wrestled and rode, the while the skiffs skimmed down the river, and the loaded barges from *Ostia* and the sea toiled up against the current. The war-galleys were moored at the *Prata Quinctia*, at one end of the *Campus*.

At the southern extremity of the plain of Mars was the fashionable quarter of Rome. There, on a broad level space, in good pure air, rose the grandest and the most beautiful houses that the patricians could erect. Strabo enumerates temples, porticoes, groves, theatres, and amphitheatres all decorating this faubourg.

The Forum was the centre of commercial and legal business in Rome. Plautus describes the idlers, braggarts, the 'straw-bail,' scandalmongers, gourmands, pretentious beggars, and retiring rich men of that locality. The *Via Sacra* and other streets leading to the Forum were so choked with ceaseless crowds, that Augustus found it necessary to throw open a third Forum. The dandies and fashionable loungers sought out a more retired promenade in the porticoes of the *Circus Flaminius*; while those who wished a ride or drive repaired to the *Appian Way*, just as the Roman cardinals and nobles now frequent the road to *Santa Agnese*, outside the *Porta Pia*.

Rome itself was as noisy and dirty as London. Conflicting noises, jarring clamours, competing din, tortured nervous students like *Martial*, and quiet poets like *Horace*. In the morning, there were the wrangling school-boys and scolding masters; at night, the bakers, and all day long the clattering coppersmiths: the vendors of sulphur jostled the buyers of broken glass, and the hoarse cooks bragging about their hot sausages, outroaring the shipwrecked mariners, the vociferating beggars, and the energetic beggars. The energetic builder, hot and hurried, with his mules and porters, and his

trucks of beams and stones, ran up against pompous funerals, ponderous wagons, mad dogs, and head-long swine. Such was the Rome of the time of *Juvenal*, of *Horace*, and of *Martial*.

Augustus divided Rome into fourteen Regions. Each region had its subdivisions, or *vici*. Each *vicius* had its little temple and *Lares*, its annual feasts, and its magistrates to take the census, and to command the public slaves when a fire occurred. There were about seven thousand police (seven cohorts) in Rome, who were also firemen. Augustus created twelve prætorian cohorts of imperial guards, but nine of these were cantoned outside the walls. The number of inhabitants in the vast hive of Rome is now generally allowed to have been about two million souls, including slaves and foreigners.

The temples in Rome, in the time of Augustus, were as splendid as the churches of the modern city. The emperor made a patron saint of *Apollo*; and after his victory over *Antony* at *Actium*, erected a temple there to the *Leucadian Phœbus*. *Propertius*, who was present at the dedication of this temple of Augustus, eulogises its splendour, which may serve as a type of what Roman temples were. The cornice of the portico was probably gilt. The columns, fifty-two in number, were of yellow African marble; between them stood statues of the fifty *Danaïdes*, and a figure of *Danaus*, their father, waving a sword. There was also a statue of *Apollo* sounding his lyre, and the god had the face of Augustus. Around the altar stood the four bronze oxen of *Myron*. The temple itself was of white marble. Over the pediment was a bronze chariot, representing that of the sun. On the ivory gates were sculptured the destruction of *Niobe* and her children, and the repulse of the Gauls from *Parnassus*. Inside the temple stood the statues of *Apollo*, *Latona*, and *Diana*. Under the base of the sun-god's statue, Augustus deposited the *Sibylline books* in gilt chests. Attached to the temple, there was a library of Greek and Latin books, where poets, orators, and philosophers recited their productions to friendly audiences. In the hall of the library stood a bronze statue of *Apollo*, fifty feet high.

The Pantheon was another magnificent structure of the Augustan age. It still exists in all its ancient size and magnificence. It was erected by *Agrippa*, the son-in-law of Augustus, 27 A.C. It probably contained only the images of deities specially connected with Rome and the Julian race. Adjoining this sacred rotunda were the public baths of *Agrippa*, which also, like other Roman baths, contained rooms for gymnastic exercise, and apartments for lectures, discussions, and recitations.

Having mentioned the grandeur of the temples and *thermæ*, let us now briefly describe *Nero's Golden House*, one of the most sumptuous of imperial palaces. The great fire, 65 A.D., which lasted six days, enabled *Nero* to erect an enormous palace facing the Forum and Capitol. A colossal statue of the royal charioteer and fiddler, one hundred and twenty feet high, stood in the vestibule. At the back of the palace was an artificial lake, on whose banks were clusters of houses, to resemble small cities. The slopes of the *Cælian* and *Esquiline* hills were converted into fields, vineyards, pastures covered with cattle, and woods filled with wild beasts. The imperial domains were comprised

in three porticoes, each a mile long—a circuit comprehending three out of the seven hills of Rome. This abode of the Seven deadly sins blazed with gold, and scintillated with mother-of-pearl; the banquet-rooms had ceilings of pierced ivory, so that perfumes might be sprinkled from above. Nero now condescended to say 'that he had at last begun to live like a man.' He had engrossed two-thirds of the city, and contemplated changing its name to Neropolis. He had also formed the mad idea of extending Rome as far as Ostia, and bringing the sea to the old city by a canal.

Let us pass from the temples and palaces to the places of amusement. Of these, the Colosseum was the most stupendous. Augustus had planned an amphitheatre in the centre of the city, but was probably deterred by the cost. The lake at the back of Nero's palace furnished, when drained, a noble site for the new arena, which was one hundred and fifty-seven feet high, and calculated to hold eighty-seven thousand spectators. Vespasian began the Colosseum, and Titus finished it, at the same time as his baths, probably on the site of the house of Mæcenas. The Roman citizens were greedy for bloodshed at all times. The dedication games lasted one hundred days. There was a combat of storks, and a battle between four wild elephants. Dion Cassius says that nine thousand wild beasts were killed on this occasion, and some by women. The amphitheatre was then filled with water, and horses and bulls were brought in and slain as they were swimming and wading. Vessels were next introduced, and their crews represented a celebrated sea-fight between the Corinthians and Coreyreans.

On the Cælian Hill, near the Flavian Amphitheatre, as the Colosseum was called, there were schools and hospitals for the gladiators, and rooms where the dead fighting-men were stripped for burial.

Such were the glories and crimes of old Rome. When may London, the enormous, the black, the wealthy, the dismal, hope to rival its predecessor in the world's empire? When will Buckingham Palace become an Aurea Donus? When will St Paul's match the bright and intellectual splendour of the temple of Apollo? When shall we have a theatre like the Flavian Amphitheatre?

It was the great clearing fire in Nero's reign, and the great conflagration in the reign of Titus, that made Rome a city of palaces. London lost her opportunity, and it may never return. May it never return is what we say, if it must return only by means of despotic orders such as those that are now piercing the Quartier Latin, and ravaging the Luxembourg. If cities become beautiful only when Pharaohs and Domitians reign, may London ever remain mean, dirty, deafening, and dangerous.

PARIS OMNIBUSES.

ANY one possessed of but moderate means, who wishes to study Paris thoroughly—that picturesque old Paris, which is daily changing beneath the wand of the enchanter—must begin by being extremely well up in his omnibuses. I went systematically to work, and having purchased for the sum of six sous an *Itinéraire*, or grammar of the science, I commenced its study both practically and theoretically. I found it uncommonly like

learning Euclid. 'The line AB corresponds with the lines C and D, and is intersected at the point H by the lines F, G, and I.' It is worse than algebra, for the lines X, Y, and Z are by no means content to be regarded as unknown quantities, but insist on having their evolutions and involutions thoroughly fixed in your brain. It is more puzzling than Euclid, for parallel lines are perpetually meeting, and two journeys that are equal to the same are by no means equal to each other. When you come to the practical part of the business, and wish to use your *correspondance*, which, judiciously employed, will enable you to travel about eight English miles for threepence, it behoves you especially to mind your *ps* and *qs*, otherwise, when you fancy you have reached your destination, you will be very apt to find yourself, like a slow race-horse, placed nowhere.

It is certainly rather startling when, on stopping at the office on the Place St Michel, and while looking, perhaps for the fiftieth time, with fresh admiration, at the colossal figure of the angel, now doubly fallen, trampled under foot by the triumphant saint, to hear a gruff voice shouting in your ears: 'Quelqu'un ici pour l'Enfer?' (Any one here going to Hell?) This awful and unpleasantly personal query, however, simply intimates that the omnibus serving the Barrière de l'Enfer corresponds at this point with the jovial Halle aux Vins, the learned Collège de France, and the pious Daughters of Calvary. There is another station where the omnibus going to the Rue du Paradis corresponds with that for the Barrière de l'Enfer; and then the question is put: 'Allez-vous au Paradis ou à l'Enfer?'

Speaking seriously, however, the system of the Paris omnibuses is as nearly perfect as any arrangement of the kind can be supposed to be. The Grande Compagnie Générale des Omnibus has, under the supervision of the government, the working of the whole. Paris and its surrounding suburbs are so ingeniously mapped out and intersected by the various lines, that no matter at what point you may find yourself, you can always arrive at any other by the moderate expenditure of threepence for a place in the interior, and half that sum for one on the imperial. The latter payment, however, does not entitle the passenger to *correspondance*. The mechanism of this latter arrangement I will illustrate by an example.

Suppose that, finding yourself one morning at the Arc de Triomphe, you wish to go to the Collège de France, in order to hear one of the most charming lecturers in Europe, M. Philarette Chasles. You enter the omnibus bureau, and say to the blue-capped official, seated behind a desk: 'La Bourse, s'il vous plait.' He hands you an oval green ticket, with a large black number on it—1, 2, or 3, if you are in luck; 20, or the succeeding numbers, if many applicants for places have preceded you. You then seat yourself either on the cushioned benches in the office, or on the wooden ones out of doors, and await the arrival of the omnibus from Passy. It approaches—it draws up—and the anxious eyes of those waiting are directed over the door, to see whether the fatal word *COMPLÉT* appears in large white letters. Yes, there it is! No chance this time. Yet stay! That fat old gentleman, with a white moustache, and a tiny red rosette in his button-hole, is leisurely descending, followed by a thin pale woman, with a baby in her

arms, poorly dressed, but wearing a cap of irreproachable whiteness.

'Deux places à l'intérieur!' cries the conductor.

'Un, deux, trois, personnes avant le quatre?'

'Le quatre commence,' replies the official of the bureau.

The happy possessor of No. 4 enters, followed by No. 5, and the omnibus drives off; No. 6 comforting himself mentally, or herself audibly, by the reflection that that numeral begins next time. Your number being 12, you have probably to wait for three omnibuses; but as they succeed each other at intervals of six minutes, the delay, after all, is not great. On entering, you pay for your place, and say: 'Correspondance, s'il vous plait.' You are then handed a small oblong ticket, white, red, brown, or green, the colour being changed every three hours; and you can, at your choice, descend at the Rue Royale, and entering the omnibus that goes to the Pantheon, pay for your place with your correspondance; or going on to the Boulevard des Italiens, take that for the Odeon; or at the Place de la Bourse, that for the Halle aux Vins; any one of which will bring you near your destination; for nearly as many roads lead to the venerable Collège, as are proverbially said to conduct to Rome.

At the bureau from whence an omnibus takes its first departure, the *numéros d'ordre* are issued by fourteen of each number; for, as there are in each carriage that amount of places, it follows, of course, that fourteen passengers can mount. What a scene it is, on a wet afternoon, at some of the more crowded stations—that at the Place de la Bourse, for instance! The small office is filled with crinolines, which, even in their diminished and mitigated form, can be accommodated in only a limited number, and flow over into the Place, completely extinguishing the luckless masculine garments wedged in amongst them. The tickets being issued are the eights, and the threes are in process of mounting, so that you have to await the departure of several omnibuses before your turn comes. Of course, there is some pushing and scrambling for places at the door of the vehicle; some feminine tens in front having an insane conviction that they will be allowed to enter before the masculine sevens in the rear rank. But the conductor is as inflexible in the duty of rejection as another conductor we wot of, and each one is forced to enter in his and her own order. No nines are issued, lest, by the obvious process of inversion, they should be made to do duty as sixes. Under no possible pretext is one over the number admitted; and the four upper places at each side of the omnibus being divided by arms, no one can encroach or be encroached upon by his neighbours. The three seats next the door are indeed undivided, and so two passengers, possessing an abnormal amount of either crinoline or *embonpoint*, will often, as I know to my cost, leave very little room for the unhappy individual riding bodkin between them.

The omnibus lines intersecting Paris are thirty-one, indicated by the twenty-five letters of the alphabet, and six diphthongs in addition; and the system of correspondance between these various lines is admirably arranged, only that, as before intimated, it requires some amount of study and experience to make yourself master of its intricacies. The conductors are, generally speaking, an honest, civil, and respectable class of men; they are forced to be so; for at the Central Bureau, any

charges of ill-conduct or incivility brought against them are carefully investigated, and if proved to be well-founded, are severely punished. They, as well as the coachmen, are very hard-worked, as the omnibuses begin to run at eight o'clock in the morning, and continue to ply without intermission until midnight. Occasionally, at stated intervals, each *employé* has a holiday. An honest conductor was once asked how he had spent his last *jour de congé*. 'Ma foi,' he replied, 'to amuse myself, I followed the route of my omnibus!'

THE SERENADE.

AWAKE, and leave the baby Sleep

In soft down hid;

The sun impatient tries to peep

Within that lid.

The robin sits upon the bough

Of leafy beech that shades thy brow,

When the white moonbeams come at night,

And whistles sweet with all his might.

Then wake, awake, my lady, wake.

At the rough bole of the meadow elm,

A little crowd

Of violets fresh in summer's realm

To thee are vowed;

They will adorn the bosom white

With softest bloom of purple light,

A fitting ornament to deck

Thy snowy dress without a speck.

Then wake, awake, my lady, wake.

Why tarriest thou asleep so long?

I fear thy soul

Hath wandered through some angel throng

Beyond control,

Forgetting where its form doth lie,

Partner of equal purity;

And so some dream of sinless love

Delays thee in a sphere above.

O wake, awake, my lady, wake.

At the porch, so small and delicate,

Of thy white ear,

All pleasant sounds of morning wait

For thee to hear:

The fresh-greened leaves, and flowers rare,

Sweet breath of blossoms in the air,

Shrill song of birds above, around—

All greet thee from thy garden ground.

Then wake, awake, my lady, wake.

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